

Neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles County were invited to join forces with thousands of communities nationwide, for the "30th Annual National Night Out" crime & drug prevention event on Tues, Aug. 6, 2013. National Night Out", was sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch and co-sponsored locally by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. It involved more than 10,000 communities from all 50 states, U.S. territories, Canadian cities & military bases around the world. More than 34 million people were expected to participate.

Avalon Sheriff's Station participated in National Night Out by setting up a booth on Crescent Avenue from 5:00 PM until 8:00 PM. The Sheriff's Station was represented by Deputies Dan Torres, Dan Zumer, Jeff Flotree, Steve Wilkinson and his drug detection dog "Tina", Station Volunteer Becky Tamayo and "McGruff" the crime fighting dog played (by Captain Doug Fetteroll).

The station's Youth Activities League sponsored the event and held a coloring contest for children using the theme "Cops Helping Kids." While numerous children drew pictures of themselves and the deputies, Deputy Flotree encouraged other youth to sign-up for the Boxing Program that he developed several months ago. Deputy Flotree welcomed any of the youth in the community to join him on Monday or Wednesday afternoons for free boxing lessons.

Deputy Zumer, who normally keeps the streets safe late at night, passed out crime prevention information for the adults and stickers for the youth while Deputy Wilkinson allowed others to meet his drug detection dog and learn how a drug dog works.

Deputy Torres and Station Volunteer Becky Tamayo, both known for their love for the community, talked to the local children about what it means to be an "Islander." Utilizing a banner with the words; Integrity, Sincere, Leader, Ambitious, Never-Quit, Dependable, Education, and Respect, all the children who agreed to live by the positive words on the banner were asked to sign the banner and then given a piece of candy.

While all of the fun was going on, simultaneous to a "Choices" lip-sync contest, McGruff walked up and down Crescent Avenue shaking hands with all the kids. Captain Fetteroll said, "This was the first time I have ever done something like this and watching the expressions on the smaller children's faces was priceless. The added benefit of being able to share the evening with a "Choices" event was an honor as their program is truly something special."

The event came to a close when the artwork of Pedro Marquez Chavoya was determined to be the winning drawing. Personnel from the Sheriff's Station presented Pedro with a DVD player that was donated to the station by the Sheriff's Youth Foundation. Pedro's drawing will be mounted in the Sheriff's Station lobby as a reminder of the importance of the community working alongside the Sheriff's Department to make a difference.